Dual Pricing Policy for Essential Commodities

1899. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering the extension of dual pricing policy of all the essential commodities including agricultural items in the proposed administered prices policy; and

(b) if so, by when the said policy is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) and (b) A discussion paper on Administered Price Policy has been presented to the Pariament on 4-8.86. It does not cover pricing of agricultural commodities, on which the Ministry of Agriculture is preparing a separate paper.

Customer service by the nationalised banks

1900. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Working Group has been set up to go into the question of customer service by the nationalised banks; and

(b) if so, what are its latest recommendations and what steps have been taken by Government to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) The measures to improve the quality of Customer Service by the banks are under continual consideration of Government/Reserve Bank of India/Public Sector Banks. Several measures have been taken by the banks in the last one year towards better Customer Service. No Working Group as such, however, has been set up by the Government to consider the matter.

(b) Does not arise.

1901. [*Transferred to the 11th August*, 1986.]

Mohan Meakin Limited

1902. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that huge amount towards excise duty is outstanding against Mohan Meakin Breweries; if so, what are the details thereof;

(b) since when the excise duty is outstanding; and

(c) what action Government have taken or propose to take for the recovery of the outstanding excise duty from the Mohan Meakin Breweries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) and (b) Confirmed demands for amount of Rs. 32,77,889.22 Ps. are pending recovery from M/s. Mohan Meakin Breweries from 4-4-1978.

(c) The recovery of the amount has been stayed by Court. Application for vacation of stay has been filed by the Department.

Harassment to Sikhs residing in North America

1903. DR. H. P. SHARMA:
SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item which appeared in the Hindustan Times of the 13th July, 1986 to the effect that Sikh residents in North

America who abhor violence and have no truck with extremists are becoming alienated and are facing harassment in the matter of securing visas to India and other additional permits required to reach home town in Punjab;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) what steps, if any, are being taken to help these peaceful Sikh residents of North America?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Under the visa rules of the Government, Indian Missions in North America, as in other parts of the world, are authorised to grant tourist visas for India to foreigners including those of Indian origin, who have not come to the adverse notice of the Government. Doubtful cases and cases of persons whose antecedents are suspect, are referred to Government of India for consideration. All foreigners, including those of Indian origin need restricted area permits to visit Punjab.

Applications for visa for India and restricted area permits from Sikh residents in North America are dealt with in the same manner as those of other foreigners. Therefore, the report that the Sikh residents are harassed is not correct.

Indo-Bangladesh talks on Ganga waters

1904. SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFIARS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as a consequence of talks held with the President of Bangladesh recently at New Delhi, India has agreed to include a third country in the negotiations to be held with Bangladesh regarding Ganga Waters; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) No Sir. India has not agreed to include a third country in the negotiations to be held with Bangladesh regarding Ganga Waters.

(b) Does not arise.

Recovery of dues from the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation

1905. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:
SHRI K. GOPALAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what amount the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation owe to LIC and other nationalised and scheduled banks as on date;

(b) since how long these dues are pending and what are the specific reasons for not paying back the amount;

(c) what steps are being taken to recover these arrears from the Corporation; and

(d) whether the Kerala Government stood any gurantee for any of these loans, and if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) to (d) According to information available with Government, the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) owe to LIC an amount of Rs. 231.68 lakhs both for principal and interest thereon, the Corporation having fallen in arrears since 31-3-1985. The reasons for not paying LIC dues may be the financial difficulties of KSRTC. The Union Finance Secretary wrote to Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala, on 25-4-1986 for expeditious clearance of